



**Connecticut Academy
of Family Physicians**

Statement concerning

Senate Bill 47 – An Act Concerning Cancelled Doctor's Appointments

General Law Committee

February 5, 2009

This statement is being submitted on behalf of the members of the Connecticut Academy of Family Physicians on Senate Bill 47 – An Act Concerning Cancelled Doctor's Appointments.

Senate Bill 47 would prohibit physicians from charging a fee for a missed appointment, provided the patient or a representative of the patient contacts the doctor's office to cancel the appointment. While we take no issue with the idea that a patient not pay for a cancelled appointment, we do think that the bill must include at least a 24 hour time-frame for notifying the physician. A 24 hour notification would allow the physician's office to fill that time slot previously reserved for the cancelling patient with another patient who needs medical attention. With adequate notice, physicians' offices are better able to prioritize the delivery of health care to those who need it. We can see more people who call for a last minute appointment, we can offer care to new patients, reduce waiting room times and more. Those practices who do charge a fee for a missed appointment do not do so to be punitive but rather to manage their offices in an efficient manner.

Other professions also charge such fee. Chiropractors, psychologists, dentists, other health care providers, swim instructors, massage therapists and many others charge fees for last minute cancellations. If this bill moves forward we would encourage this Committee to consider

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adding in other professionals into this bill.

While not all offices or businesses charge a fee for cancelled appointments, those that do normally adhere to at least a 24 hour notice and even in those offices, a majority will waive the fee if a last minute cancellation is made provided that a reasonable explanation is provided.

We believe that a 24 hour notification is fair to both parties.

For more information, please call:

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